

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, has the Senator from Alabama finished?

Mr. SESSIONS. I would like a few minutes to finish up if the Senator will yield.

Mr. TALENT. I will yield.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank Senator TALENT for his courtesy which is well-known in this body.

Mr. President, Senator LIEBERMAN is correct. The families I talk to so often say to me about their son or daughter or spouse who lost their life that they loved their work, they were doing what they wanted to do, they believed in what they were doing, and that gives them comfort. I have heard that over and over again. It is very similar to what the Senator heard today.

I know the Senator's call was very comforting to the family because I know the Senator has the sensitivity and judgment to reach out to them in the proper way. It is not an easy thing to do, for sure.

I have, indeed, valued the Senator's partnership on the Airland Subcommittee. We have never had a harsh word nor even a serious disagreement. It does show that those of us who are from different parties love America, we want to see our military using the money wisely and doing the right things with it.

It has been a pleasure for me to work with the Senator from Connecticut. I have learned so much from him.

I will not go over the benefits of the program, which Senator LIEBERMAN has already mentioned. I think that this legislation is a step in the right direction. I would note that it is retroactive to the beginning of the war in Afghanistan. I would also note that the Defense Department has studied this legislation. I asked them to do that last year as part of our Defense bill. They support it. It will have an initial cost estimated at \$459 million, and it should drop to half of that in the future and hopefully much less than that. I think these costs are clearly justified.

Our service members are assigned all over the globe in dangerous parts of the world. As an editorial in the San Diego Union Tribune said:

The costs are beside the point. This is a case in which lawmakers have a moral obligation to do the right thing, regardless of cost.

I think this legislation is the right thing. I do believe we have great support so far and I look forward to seeing it become law. I also thank the Chair for his cosponsorship of this legislation.

I thank Senator TALENT for his courtesy, and I yield the floor.

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I was happy to yield to my friend. I thought he was finished or I would not have sought the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

COMMEMORATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF THE AUSCHWITZ EXTERMINATION CAMP IN POLAND

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I rise today on behalf of Mr. WYDEN and myself to speak about a resolution we are submitting to commemorate the liberation of Auschwitz, where more than 1 million people were murdered at the hands of the Nazis. Sixty years ago tomorrow, allied forces successfully liberated the most notorious of Nazi death camps, freeing those who managed to live in the most deplorable of conditions and yet somehow survive the greatest evil the world has ever witnessed.

For 5 long years at Auschwitz, men, women, and children arrived in cattle cars from all parts of Europe. Whether young or old, rich or poor, they were systematically stripped of their dignity before being murdered because of their religion and their deeply held faith in God. But 60 years ago tomorrow the genocide ended and the gates to freedom were opened.

With the passage of time, people tend to forget the events of the past, particularly if those events occurred well before their birth. The survivors of Auschwitz are elderly and they are dwindling in number, but their stories of how good successfully triumphed over evil will live on in our history and our hearts.

The resolution Senator WYDEN and I introduce today commemorates Auschwitz and urges all Americans to remember those who were murdered there, murdered for nothing more than practicing their religion. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations never to forget that horror.

I am pleased to say leaders from around the world, including Vice President and Mrs. Cheney, are traveling to Poland for tomorrow's commemoration ceremony. They will be joined by survivors who are still able to make the trip out into the Polish countryside.

I hope this resolution will serve as a reminder that the Senate, indeed all Americans, remembers the events of 60 years ago tomorrow. It is also my hope that when anti-Semitism rears its ugly head, the world will feel a collective responsibility to stand up and speak out against religious hatred. That at least will give meaning to the sacrifice of those who were murdered and incinerated in the ovens of Auschwitz.

Mr. President, I am informed that the resolution has been cleared on both sides. I am very pleased to hear that. On behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 18, which was submitted earlier today, the resolution about which I have been speaking.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:
A resolution (S. Res. 18) commemorating the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz extermination camp in Poland.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, perhaps more than any other word, Auschwitz is synonymous with evil.

Sixty years ago today, Russian soldiers liberated Auschwitz.

The horrors of Auschwitz are incomprehensible and undescrivable.

Over 1 million people lost their lives at Auschwitz—the largest of the Nazi death camps. Ninety percent were Jews. Hundreds of thousands were children.

Auschwitz represented the Germans' campaign to exterminate a people—the Jews. They almost succeeded—killing 2 out of 3 Jews in Europe.

As a Polish American, I carry the images of Auschwitz in my heart.

The Nazis considered all Poles to be an inferior race. After Poland was conquered, German authorities expelled much of the native Polish population from regions of the newly annexed territories. Polish cities were given German names and German settlers were colonized on Polish land. In occupied Poland, the Nazi Governor, Hans Frank, proclaimed: "Poles will become slaves in the Third Reich."

The Nazis set out to destroy Polish culture. Thousands of Polish teachers, politicians, university professors and artists were executed or sent to Nazi concentration camps. Catholic priests were among the main targets of Nazi mass murder in Poland.

In fact, Auschwitz was created as an internment camp for Polish dissidents. And thousands of Poles were murdered alongside the Jews in Auschwitz.

Many Poles risked their lives to save Jews:

Irena Sendler was a young social worker in Warsaw. She used her position to smuggle 200 Jewish children out of the ghetto to safe houses. In 1943, Sendler was arrested by the Gestapo, brutally tortured and condemned to death. On the day of her execution, she was freed with the help of the Jewish underground.

Irena Adamowicz, a Polish Catholic, aided in establishing contacts between the Jewish Underground and the main Polish resistance organization.

Jan Karski, who, while working for the Polish Government in exile, was one of the few outsiders to visit the Warsaw Ghetto. He appealed to the Allies to do something.

As a Polish American, I traveled to Poland in the late 1970s. I was a Congresswoman. And I wanted to see my heritage. I went to the small village where my family came from. It was a very moving and historic experience.

But I also wanted to see the dark side of my history, and I went to Auschwitz.

In touring Auschwitz, it was an incredibly moving experience to go through the gate, to see the sign, to go to see the chambers. I went to a cell that had been occupied by Father